

The Quest 254

Chapter 254: The Siege

Mo Hua finished drawing the array without alerting the criminals. Using the grass for cover, he quietly retreated.

"I have completed the array, leaving just one opening. Tomorrow, we will pass through there," Mo Hua pointed out the opening in the array to Zhang Lan.

Zhang Lan nodded, "Thank you."

Lu Hui asked, "Director Zhang, is Young Master Kong Sheng in the valley?"

Zhang Lan shook his head, "I watched all afternoon but did not see Young Master Kong."

Mo Hua had also scouted with his spiritual sense and found only criminals inside, no other cultivators, let alone Kong Sheng. It was likely he was already dead.

Lu Hui's expression grew increasingly grave.

If Kong Sheng was truly dead, how would he explain this to the Kong family?

Zhang Lan ignored him and instead selected a few cultivators to take turns keeping watch while the others rested, preparing to act at dawn.

The noise in the cave gradually quieted down, leaving only occasional snores and murmurs.

As dawn approached, the criminals still lay sprawled around, including those on guard duty near the valley entrance who were dozing off.

This place had been their hidden refuge for so long without being discovered, leading to their laxity.

Zhang Lan drew his blade, exchanged a glance with his comrades, and whispered, "Move!"

The group entered the valley through the opening in the Earth fire array. Upon encountering the criminals, they swiftly covered their mouths and slit their throats.

After killing a few, they were suddenly discovered. A criminal shouted, "Who's there? How dare you!"

Chaos erupted, and a melee ensued.

Mo Hua did not enter the valley, deeming his participation unnecessary in this situation. He opted to stay outside and watch.

Before long, a defeated criminal fled toward the valley entrance, stepping into the Earth fire array.

A flash of fire sent the criminal flying, crashing to the ground in a miserable state.

Lu Hui, watching from a distance, felt his eyelid twitch.

The Earth fire array's power was greater than he had anticipated.

What level of array master was that little cultivator?

Meanwhile, the battle within the valley became more intense.

The criminals were not easily dealt with, and although they were groggy from their drunken stupor, the situation still favored the Dao Court.

Zhang Lan, utilizing his agile movements, weaved through the criminals, forming sword energy in his hand to strike at several spiritual cultivators among them.

Suddenly, he noticed Guang Toutuo trying to escape and shouted, "Guang Toutuo! Don't let him get away!"

Mo Shan and Ji Qingbai both advanced to engage Guang Toutuo, with Lu Hui joining the fray.

Zhang Lan wanted to assist but was temporarily tied up, needing to first deal with the spiritual cultivators among the criminals, who otherwise would target his men.

Guang Toutuo, despite his strong cultivation, could not hold his own against three opponents and soon fell into a disadvantage.

Ji Qingbai seized an opening and swung his Hidden Wood Blade at Guang Toutuo, his blade infused with a surge of pale green spiritual energy.

Guang Toutuo, unable to dodge in time, was about to be struck when Lu Hui suddenly turned his sword towards Ji Qingbai's nape.

"Watch out!" Mo Shan shouted.

Ji Qingbai tried to withdraw his blade to defend, but it was too late.

Mo Shan, fighting Guang Toutuo, deflected Lu Hui's sword, though the impact numbed his arm and caused his blood to churn, leaving him vulnerable.

Seeing this, Guang Toutuo's eyes flashed with viciousness as he swung his blade wrapped in pale white wind blades at Mo Shan.

Guang Toutuo, possessing rare wind spiritual roots, was extremely fast.

Mo Shan, disrupted by deflecting Lu Hui's sword, could not evade the attack.

Ji Qingbai, turning swiftly, held his blade horizontally in front of Mo Shan, taking Guang Toutuo's blow and spitting blood from the impact.

Taking advantage of the gap, Guang Toutuo, moving like the wind, escaped their encirclement.

Ignoring Guang Toutuo, Lu Hui aimed his sword at Ji Qingbai again, but Zhang Lan formed a water sword and struck in front of him.

"Director Lu, what do you intend to do?" Zhang Lan coldly asked.

Lu Hui remained composed, "Naturally, I want to kill Guang Toutuo. Unfortunately, he escaped."

"Is that so?" Zhang Lan's expression darkened.

"Otherwise?" Lu Hui sneered.

Zhang Lan snorted, "Don't let me see you trying to stab someone in the back again, or I'll kill you myself."

Lu Hui did not back down, "Director Zhang, are you trying to frame me?"

Zhang Lan ignored him and pursued Guang Toutuo.

A flicker of venom flashed in Lu Hui's eyes.

Among this group, the only one he truly feared was Zhang Lan. However, they were both directors of different branches of the Dao Court, so he didn't need to overly concern himself with Zhang Lan's attitude.

He had come to rescue Young Master Kong and earn the Kong family's favor. But now it seemed Young Master Kong was likely dead.

In that case, killing Ji Qingbai would serve as an explanation when he returned to Qingxuan City.

Ji Qingbai and his father had grievances with the Kong family and had fled to Tongxian City. If they continued to live safely, how could the Kong family intimidate other wandering cultivators in Qingxuan City?

If other wandering cultivators followed their example, the Kong family's dominance would be threatened.

Lu Hui's daily luxuries and cultivation resources were provided by the Kong family, so their interests were his interests. He would eventually have to deal with the Ji family father and son.

If they were in Qingxuan City, he had countless ways to imprison them and then make an example of them.

Since they hadn't returned and were under the protection of demon hunters, he had to kill them here, discreetly.

Ji Qingbai was just an ordinary wandering cultivator.

He could "accidentally" kill Ji Qingbai and receive a mild reprimand upon returning, and the matter would be brushed off.

As a director of the Dao Court, he didn't believe anyone would openly act against him. Whether it was Zhang Lan or the demon hunters, they would face the Dao Court's retribution if they attacked him.

"Too bad I missed the chance just now, but there's still time," he thought.

Killing Ji Qingbai would earn the Kong family's favor, and capturing Guang Toutuo would be a great achievement—killing two birds with one stone.

Having failed in his earlier attempt to kill Ji Qingbai, he had to focus on stopping Guang Toutuo now.

Lu Hui's eyes gleamed as he pursued Guang Toutuo.

Ji Qingbai also wanted to give chase but was stopped by Mo Shan, "Brother Ji, Lu Hui wants to kill you."

Ji Qingbai fumed, "I'll kill him first to avoid dragging you all down."

"He's a Dao Court director. Killing him would bring even greater trouble."

"But..."

Mo Shan said firmly, "Let's deal with these criminals first and then talk."

Ji Qingbai hesitated, sighed, and reluctantly nodded.

The criminals, groggy from their drunkenness and caught off guard, gradually fell into a disadvantage.

One by one, they collapsed, leaving only the one-eyed cultivator struggling to hold on, though he wouldn't last much longer.

The one-eyed cultivator's movements were clumsy; his previous escape had been sheer luck. Now trapped in the valley, he had no chance of escape.

Guang Toutuo, using his wind escape technique, had already reached the valley entrance and saw the Earth fire array.

He cursed, "Where did this damn array come from? Blocking my way!"

He didn't dare force his way through. Thinking quickly, his eyes turned cold as he grabbed a criminal and threw him toward the entrance.

Caught off guard, the criminal was thrown into the array, which exploded, seriously injuring him, his life uncertain.

Guang Toutuo continued throwing other criminals to trigger the array.

These criminals, brothers when benefits were shared, showed no loyalty when in danger.

The Earth fire array, powered by spirit stones provided by Zhang Lan, though numerous, was finite. After several detonations, the stones were exhausted.

Ordinary mountain stones, not high-grade array mediums, caused the array patterns to deteriorate after a few explosions.

Soon, a gap appeared in the Earth fire array.

By this time, Zhang Lan and Lu Hui had reached the valley entrance.

Seeing this, Guang Toutuo's expression turned desperate. Without hesitation, he used his body technique to flee the valley.

Mo Hua, hidden in the grass outside, raised his right hand, rapidly gathering spiritual energy.

With a Water Prison Technique, he could capture Guang Toutuo.

But after a moment's thought, he lowered his hand and watched as Guang Toutuo escaped through the array, leaving a blurred trail behind.